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## **Anselm of Canterbury and his theological inheritance, Giles E. M. Gasper**

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Many of the notes, keyed to the Italian translation, are useful: some contain new parallels (e.g., in the *Letter from Prester John*, n. 33), comments on vocabulary (e.g., n. 68 on *cydaris*), and explanatory notes with references to secondary scholarship (e.g., n. 311 on *clericus*). The *comparanda* would be better placed in an *apparatus fontium* like Vollmann's. The only indices included are one to sources and parallels and another to works, primary or secondary, mentioned in the introduction and notes. The former awkwardly directs readers to the Latin line: they then must find the note in the translation before they can go to the citation in the endnotes.

The *Ruodlieb* is a particularly interesting challenge for the editor. It is also an important text, both in its own right and as a witness to the evolution of medieval literature in Latin and the vernacular. The question remains, however, whether we needed another edition of the *Ruodlieb* when there are so many poorly served but important medieval Latin texts. Alain de Lille's *De planctu Naturae*, for example, is still not available in monograph form, since the only critical edition is that of Nikolaus Häring in *Studi medievali* (1978). Many texts are published but not in critical editions. This includes Alexander Neckham's widely read scientific tract, *De naturis rerum*, and Gerald of Wales's *Topographia Hiberniae*. I would urge Gamberini to turn his considerable editorial skills to making more accessible some of the less well served works of medieval Latin.

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GILES E. M. GASPER, *Anselm of Canterbury and His Theological Inheritance*. Aldershot, Eng., and Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2004. Pp. xv, 228; tables. \$79.95.

The task that Giles Gasper has set himself at the beginning of his important study on the roots of the thought of Anselm of Canterbury (1033–1109) is a formidable one. Anselm generally refrained from citing sources—apart from biblical quotations—leading Gasper to exclaim in his preface that this procedure, though not uncommon in the Middle Ages, is “one which Anselm takes to the extreme.” Even more importantly, nothing is known of his training, if any, in the period before he became a monk at Bec in Normandy. Scholars as diverse as Étienne Gilson (*Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages*, 1938), Bertrand Russell (*History of Western Philosophy*, 1946), and the astute Richard Southern (*Saint Anselm: A Portrait in a Landscape*, 1990) have remarked that Anselm's thought and his program of study were almost entirely dependent on Augustine. Gasper's goal is “to raise possibilities hitherto not considered concerning the intellectual inheritance available to Anselm, and specifically concerning the writings of the Fathers of the Church” (p. xiii), particularly the Greek Fathers.

Gasper's introduction presents a *status quaestionis*, which critically discusses the assumptions on which earlier scholars based their Augustinian bias when they reflected on Anselm's use of patristic material. Chapter 1, “Anselm and His Sources,” points out the great merit of F. S. Schmitt's grand edition of Anselm's work for identifying patristic sources that may have informed Anselm's work, including those of Eastern Fathers in Latin translation. In this context Gasper broadens his theme by treating the problem of Greek patristic writings in the (early) medieval West in general; this chapter is highly informative, but it seems to this reader to overstate the obvious in sentences such as “Thus the Latin West inherits elements of Greek theological thought even in writings of the founding Latin Fathers” (p. 16). Another weakness in this chapter, and throughout the book, lies in formulations such as “Anselm of Canterbury's *potential* relations with translated Greek Patristic sources . . .” (p. 27, my emphasis). “Potential” and “possible” are terms that show an author's understanding of the problems under discussion, but they can also easily turn into the sinking sands of hypotheses that verge on speculation. A particularly strong aspect of

this chapter nonetheless is Gasper's treatment of Anselm's theology in connection with patristic sources and his observation that Anselm took neither those writings nor his own work as "anything other than attempts at an answer and as pointers to that which lies beyond themselves" (p. 41). Gasper thus demolishes the notion of "influence" on Anselm, and instead he posits him as an independent thinker in the line of Christian thought, who used what was available to him in texts and in oral history.

Chapter 2, "The Wandering Scholar," treats the opportunities Anselm may have had in gaining access to Greek patristic theology through his many travels and his correspondence. In the course of this chapter there are many useful insights into the contents and the function of Norman libraries and their Greek patristic holdings and the links between them. The library at Bec is treated in chapter 3, which includes a useful table of Greek patristic authors available in that monastery. Chapters 4, "Faith Seeking Understanding," and 5, "The Christological Frame," connect Anselm's theology to his reading or knowledge of patristic sources. Gasper's basic contention is that "his approaches to both of these areas can be shown to have been shared, in a variety of ways, with more than one of the Eastern Fathers" (p. 144). This point is well taken and argued interestingly, but it does not strike one as more than a "possibility" of actual use or influence of the Greek Fathers. Finally, chapter 6, "The Council of Bari," discusses Anselm's involvement in the discussions in 1098 between the Latin and Greek churches on the doctrine of the procession of the Holy Spirit. Here Gasper points out a weakness in Anselm, which not only applies to his work at the Council of Bari but to his attitude in general: Anselm showed an appreciation for doctrinal differences, but he made "little attempt to move beyond that appreciation." His emphasis lay on the "local" church and on charity; Gasper sums up Anselm's position: "one in faith if not in practice" (p. 200).

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GILES OF ROME, *Giles of Rome's "On Ecclesiastical Power": A Medieval Theory of World Government*, ed. and trans. R. W. Dyson. (Records of Western Civilization.) New York and Chichester: Columbia University Press, 2004. Pp. xxxiv, 406; 1 black-and-white figure. \$72.50 (cloth); \$32.50 (paper).

When R. W. Dyson published a translation of Giles of Rome's *On Ecclesiastical Power* in 1986 (reviewed in this journal 64 [1989], 951–52), he learned that the standard edition of the text by Richard Scholz (1929) had considerable shortcomings. Some twenty years later he has resolved the problem of the Latin text by publishing a revised translation with a facing Latin text and readings from five manuscripts. Scholz based his edition on Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Magliabecchiano I.VII.12. Dyson has relied on Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 4229, and Vatican Library, Vat. lat. 5612.

His Latin text is well done. Sources are accurately identified. His lightly revised translation for this edition is also very good. The tract is a landmark in the polemics surrounding the power and authority of the pope. Giles was a papalist. He dedicated his work to Pope Boniface VIII (although I would not call the dedicatory letter "fulsome"), which means that it was written before the pope's death in October 1303. In his letter to Boniface he called his treatise a "compilatio." In classical Latin the verb *compilare* means "to plunder." In the high Middle Ages it came to mean "compose." At the time that Giles was writing a proper translation might be "to compile." The jurists used the word in this sense frequently. The point is important because of the structure of the treatise. Dyson remarks several times that it is repetitious and that its structure is "long and often weary." But if you view the text as a mine to be plundered for arguments to support Boniface VIII's vision of the world, you begin to understand Giles's methodology. The three parts of the treatise then deal with